

2023 Grand Marshals

Individual Wrestling



2023 STATE FINALS

ILLINOIS HIGH SCHOOL ASSOCIATION

Here are the 2023 Grand Marshals who will lead the annual Grand March of Finalists Saturday night before the championship bouts of the 85th IHSAA Individual Wrestling State Final Tournament.

MIKE GARLAND

Mike Garland dedicated nearly twenty years of his career coaching wrestling at his alma mater, Granite City High School.

Prior to coaching, he enjoyed a decorated career on the mat at Granite City, where he was the team leader in pins and points en route to all-conference honors. He was a state qualifier in the single class days of the state tourney (16 qualifiers per weight class) and went on to earn a degree from Southern Illinois University.

Mike's coaching career at Granite City included two stints as a Warrior assistant coach in the 1980's, which bookended his time as an assistant wrestling coach at Belleville Area Junior College. He ascended to the Granite City High School head wrestling coach position in 1987 and held that role until his retirement in 1999.

Mike compiled a career coaching record of 274-40-2, helping the Warrior program ascend to the most dual team victories in the county, as Granite City High School became the first high school in the country to reach 1,000 dual team victories in February of 1998.

The Warriors enjoyed an incredible dual team run under Mike's leadership, as they finished in the Top 8 in the state six times, including placing fourth at the IHSAA State Finals in 1999. Granite City High School's 1995 team was ranked first in the state and tenth in the nation, but the team lost its shot at a state title when the state meet was cancelled.

All told, Mike's teams achieved nine conference championships, eight Regional crowns and seven Sectional titles. 57 wrestlers qualified for state under Mike's tutelage, while T.J. Slay (1995, 130lb) and John Venne (1996, 160) ultimately won individual state championships.

Mike was honored as the IWCOA Coach of the Year in 1995 and was later inducted into the organization's Hall of Fame. He is also a member of the Granite Cit Sports Hall of Fame, along with numerous other regional and national honors.

Prior to his time at Granite City High School, Mike also coached numerous sports at Madison High School, Madison Junior High School and Coolidge Junior High School.

LARRY KANKE

A native of Rock Island and graduate of Eastern Illinois University, Larry Kanke received his Master's Degree from the University of Illinois and an Administration certificate from Eastern Illinois University.

As a wrestler at Eastern Illinois University, he placed fourth at 177 pounds in the NCAA Division II Nationals. He was a two-time conference champion and was the NAIA District 20 Outstanding Wrestler. He had a record of 28-2 his senior year and won the team's Most Falls Award.

After graduation, Larry began his coaching career in Geneseo, Illinois, but was drafted into the Army and served his country for two years. He returned to Geneseo as the Head Varsity Wrestling Coach and served in that capacity for 32 years.

Coach Kanke was instrumental in starting Geneseo's Junior High Wrestling Program, the Little League Program and the Nationally known Bi-State Wrestling Invitational. His teams won eleven conference titles and five regional titles during his tenure. Larry's teams had a dual meet record of 393-201-4 with 66 state qualifiers and 12 state place winners. His two sons, Tim and Mike, both placed twice at the IHSAA state tournament.

Coach Kanke retired from teaching and coaching in Geneseo in 2002, the same year he was inducted into the IWCOA Hall of Fame. In 2005, he became head coach at his alma mater, Rock Island Senior High School, where he compiled a record of 28-18 and coached Reese Taylor to a state championship.

Larry is a member of the Geneseo High School Hall of Fame, as well as the National Wrestling Hall of Fame Illinois Chapter and also received the latter's Lifetime Service Award.



Mike Garland



Larry Kanke



Randall Konstans



Roy Snyder

RANDALL KONSTANS

Randall Konstans was introduced to the sport of wrestling when he entered St. Charles High School in the fall of 1978. For the following four wrestling seasons, Randy's experience was shaped by the very capable hands of Coaches Fred Bruder and Chuck Robinson.

Upon graduating from St. Charles High School, Randy enrolled in Illinois Wesleyan University. Randy continued his wrestling career by wrestling all four years for the Titans. Wrestling at 118/126 lbs. for his collegiate career, Randy was a three-time place winner in the rugged College Conference of Illinois and Wisconsin (CCIW).

In 1987, following his graduation from Illinois Wesleyan, Randy took the position of assistant wrestling coach at his alma mater. During his stay at St. Charles, Randy came to assume a multifaceted role as an assistant to Hall of Famer Mick Ruettiger. His responsibilities included coaching at various scholastic levels (including Varsity); assisting with the organization and running of numerous wrestling events held at the high school; and organizing and structuring the weight-lifting regimen for the wrestling program.

With the availability of a full-time teaching position at West Aurora High School in the spring of 1989, Randy interviewed for the position and was accepted. Although at a new school as a full-time educator, Randy's commitment to the West Aurora wrestling program mirrored his past-practice. For the next twelve years Randy served as an untiring Varsity Assistant Coach. He assumed the role of weight-lifting coordinator as well as an organizer for multiple wrestling events hosted by the high school. Additionally, during the spring and summer periods he volunteered to help to organize and supervise West's "Open Gym" for individuals seeking to improve their skills in both Freestyle and Greco-Roman techniques. And finally, one would be hard pressed to be at a spring or summer tournament and **NOT** see Konstans volunteering to work a scoring table.

Along with Lester Coleman, in 1995 Randy helped organize and run the Freestyle and Greco-Roman Junior Duals held at SIU-Edwardsville. In this same time period Randy helped to organize and supervise local area wrestlers in cultural exchanges to Rhode Island and Winnipeg, Canada.

For his dedication and service to the sport Randy was recognized by the IWCOA as its Assistant Coach-of-the-Year in 1992 — and again in 1998. In both years Randy was named as one of the coaches for the Indiana-Illinois Scholastic Duals.

In 2000-01, Randy was selected to replace West Aurora's retiring Athletic Director. Additionally, for the following four years Randy served as the DuPage Valley Conference's Wrestling Resource Athletic Director — the AD in charge of wrestling for the conference. It was during this period that West Aurora (*under Randy's guidance*) hosted the DVC Conference Tournament as well as several IHSAA Regional Tournaments. The IWCOA recognized Randy's contributions to the sport of wrestling when, in 2006, they named Randy Konstans as its Administrator-of-the-Year.

Randy departed West Aurora for the Athletic Director's position at Lockport High School in 2006. In 2010, Randy was offered the position at Downers Grove South High School — an offer he opted to accept and continues to currently serve it.

Although Randy's responsibilities encompass a variety of areas — each of which demands a significant portion of his time — he still makes time to give back to the sport of wrestling. Since 2004 Randy has served as a Bench Official for the IHSAA Individual State Tournament. In recent years, he has served as the Co-Head Bench Official. From 2004 through 2010 he has served as a Bench Official at the IHSAA Dual Team State Tournament. From 2007 until present Randy has served as a member of the National Wrestling Hall of Fame-Illinois Chapter Committee; he has been its treasurer since 2010. In 2014, in recognition of his dedication, commitment and service to the sport of wrestling, the IWCOA inducted Randy Konstans into its Hall of Fame and in 2017 was inducted into the National Wrestling Hall of Fame-Illinois Chapter Lifetime Service Award.

ROY SNYDER

Roy's participation in sports began in the early 1970's at Dubuque Hempstead High School in Dubuque, Iowa where he participated in wrestling, football, and track. He received all-conference honors his senior year in both wrestling and football. Roy was selected Team Captain in both sports and went on to compete in football at North Iowa Area Community College in Mason City, Iowa. He then matriculated to the University of Dubuque where he obtained a Bachelor of Science Degree in Industrial Safety.

Roy, his wife and their two young sons moved to Illinois in 1991, settling in Mt. Morris before moving to Rochelle in 2010. Roy's participation in sports continued as a volunteer coach in soccer, baseball, wrestling and football. His first year as an IHSAA licensed official was 1991 in football, followed by wrestling in 1992 and baseball and softball in 1994. In addition to officiating, Roy was elected to a local school board for several years and participated in several races each year, including the completion of the 2005 Chicago Marathon.

Roy's accomplishments in officiating IHSAA wrestling state series include: 31 IHSAA Wrestling Regionals, 26 IHSAA Wrestling Sectionals, 13 IHSAA Wrestling Dual Team Sectionals, 10 IHSAA Dual Team State Finals, 11 IHSAA Boys Individual State Finals, working the inaugural IHSAA Girls Wrestling Individual State Finals, totaling 22 IHSAA Wrestling State Finals. Roy was the IWCOA President from 2019-2022 and oversaw the IWCOA sponsored Individual State Finals during 2021's pandemic season.

Roy is one of seven IHSAA officials to officiate four different IHSAA State Finals, achieving the rare feat in the sports of Boys Wrestling, Girls Wrestling, Football, and Baseball. Additional accomplishments in wrestling include working 16 Dvorak Tournaments, eight Illinois vs. Indiana Duals, 10 IESA State Finals, 11 IKWF Individual State Finals, and three IKWF Dual Team State Finals.

In addition to 33 years as a Certified IHSAA wrestling officiating, Roy has accomplished the following in IHSAA officiating: four Football State Finals, three Baseball State Finals and currently an IHSAA Certified Wrestling and Baseball Clinician.